PUBLIC OPINION

IN LEBANON
ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations Department of Public Information commissioned a public opinion poll in Lebanon to assess the awareness, knowledge and image of the UN. The poll was conducted during February-March 1992.

THE RESULTS IN BRIEF

- More than half of the people of Lebanon say the United Nations is doing a good job.
- Most Lebanese are familiar with the United Nations.
- Almost three fourths of the respondents can name agencies, bodies or institutions of the UN.

UN PERFORMANCE RATING

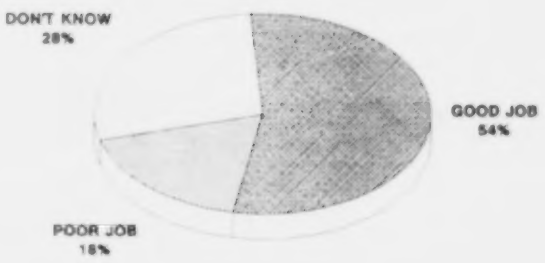

FIGURE 1

RATING UN PERFORMANCE

Fifty-four per cent of Lebanese believe that the United Nations is doing a good job in the handling of problems on its agenda. About one fifth of the people polled refer to the Organization's performance as poor and an equal proportion do not venture an opinion on the work of the UN.

The greatest difference among those who favorably rate the work of the United Nations is between professionals (59 per cent) and unskilled workers (27 per cent). Residents of Beirut (60 per cent) compared to those who live in the southern Lebanon city of Saidon (30 per cent) say the UN is doing a good job.

AWARENESS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

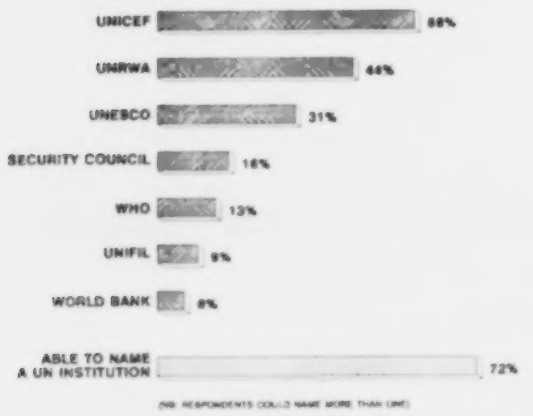

FIGURE 2

ABILITY TO NAME A UN INSTITUTION

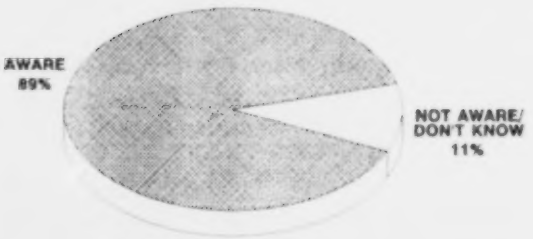

FIGURE 3

REASONS FOR UN PERFORMANCE RATING

When asked to give reasons for their favorable rating of United Nations' activities, the majority (43 per cent) base their assessment on the work the UN does in caring for people, particularly children in times of crisis.

Other reasons for giving the UN a positive evaluation include: its role in maintaining international peace and security, the assistance it gives to developing countries, contributions during the Lebanon war and other humanitarian relief activities.

Among the reasons given for negative evaluation are: the lack of UN commitment in regard to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon's territory, and its bias against the Arab countries in relation to the Middle East crisis.

AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Most people of Lebanon (89 per cent) know of the United Nations. Awareness levels are highest among professionals (97 per cent) and recipients of a formal education (96 per cent). There is a higher level of awareness of the UN among people who live in Beirut (93 per cent) than people who live in Tripoli (81 per cent) and Saidon (77 per cent).

About three-fourths of the respondents are able to name an agency, body or institution of the United Nations. UNICEF (58 per cent) is the best known UN agency in Lebanon. UNRWA (44 per cent) and UNESCO (31 per cent) are also mentioned. For these agencies, educational and occupational status are key indicators as to whether or not they are named. The university educated and the professionals are more familiar with these agencies.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Two thirds of the people polled are able to identify the current Secretary-General from a list of office-holders.

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali is better known among the university-trained and professionals than among those with little or no formal education and unskilled workers.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Most of the people of Lebanon (84 per cent) cite television as their primary source of information about the United Nations. Almost half of the people polled name as their sources: radio, newspapers, and word of mouth.

Forty-two per cent of Lebanese say they recall being taught about the United Nations in school. About one third of the respondents recall being taught about the UN in high school. More people living in Saidon are taught about the UN than in Tripoli and Beirut.

IDENTIFYING THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

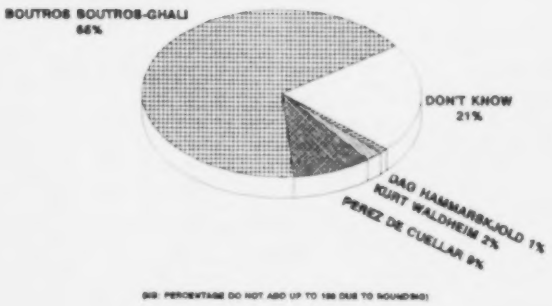
BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI 66%
DON'T KNOW 21%
DAG HAMMARSKJOLD 1%
KURT WALDHEIM 2%
PEREZ DE CUELLAR 9%
(NB: PERCENTAGE DO NOT ADD UP TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING)

FIGURE 4

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE UN

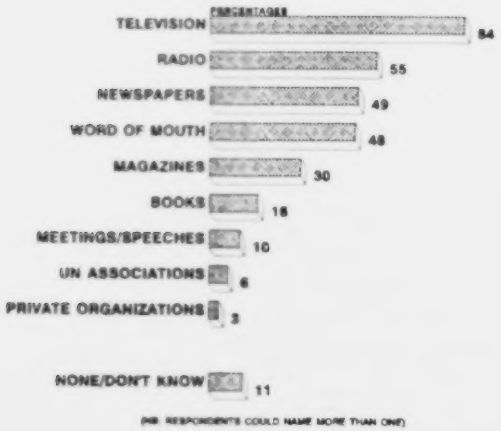

FIGURE 5

TEACHING ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

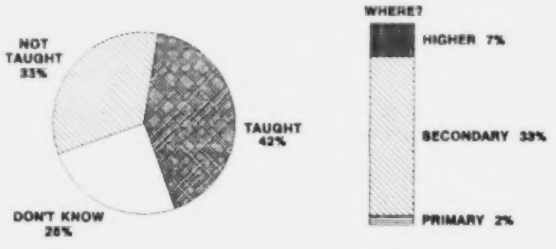

FIGURE 6

INTEREST IN UNITED NATIONS ISSUES

	VERY INTERESTED %	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED %	NOT INTERESTED %
AIDS	70	20	10
DRUG ABUSE	68	25	7
CRIME PREVENTION	67	24	9
THE WORK OF THE UN IN GENERAL	67	24	9
DECOLONIZATION	66	24	10
INT'L PEACE AND SECURITY	66	22	11
HUMAN RIGHTS	64	27	9
REFUGEES & DISASTER RELIEF	63	24	13
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	62	24	14
CHILDREN'S ISSUES	56	32	12
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN	56	27	17
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	54	31	15
INT'L LAW & TREATIES	53	28	19
WORLD FOOD PROBLEMS	49	36	16
DISARMAMENT	48	38	14
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT	46	33	21
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	45	33	22
IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITIONS	45	36	19
INT'L DEBT CRISIS	33	31	36
NEW WORLD INFORMATION ORDER	32	24	43
POPULATION ISSUES	28	43	29
APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA	21	38	40
AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY	19	42	39

FIGURE 7

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

The poll was conducted in Lebanon by the Market Research Organization (MRO) based in Amman, Jordan. A representative sample of 1001 adult men and women were interviewed. The interviews were carried out face-to-face in the respondent's homes during February and March 1992. The margin of sampling error is estimated at ± 3 per cent.

The Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit of the United Nations Department of Public Information undertakes public opinion polls to "analyse trends of public opinion throughout the world about the activities of the United Nations and the extent to which an informed understanding of the work of the United Nations is being secured". General Assembly resolution 13(1), paragraph 13, Annex 1 of 13 February 1946.

INTEREST IN UN ISSUES

A majority of Lebanese are interested in receiving information about the work of the United Nations in the areas of AIDS, drug abuse, crime prevention, the work of the UN in general and decolonization. Overall they showed little interest in the international debt crisis, new world information order, population issues, anti-apartheid and African economic recovery.

CONCLUSION

More than half of Lebanese positively rate the work of the United Nations. The primary reason they give for their favorable evaluation is the work that it does in caring for the disadvantaged and the care it gives to children during times of crisis. In addition, they also refer to the assistance the UN gives to developing nations. Most of the respondents have heard of the UN and almost three fourths can name agencies, bodies and institutions. UNICEF and UNRWA are the best known agencies in Lebanon.

For more information, contact the Programme Evaluation and Communications Research Unit, Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017 Phone (212) 963-6872, Fax (212) 963-6601

Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information
DPI/1370 - April 1993 - 2.5M

UNITED NATIONS